Are We Living in Satan's Little Season?

My wife and I recently made a YouTube short about the millennial reign of Christ from Revelation 20. We were hoping to surpass 1,000 subscribers, but we got so much more: our first introduction into “Satan’s Little Season” eschatology.

Comments soon started popping up about how we were living under Satan’s deception, Jesus had already returned with the destruction of the temple in 70 AD, and that much of history and science is a lie. We wanted to know more, and quickly discovered this theology is gaining ground, especially online.

What we discovered was a developing theology that asks some challenging questions but arrives at troubling conclusions. If you've heard about Satan's little season or are curious what this is all about, let me walk you through what we learned (or watch our first long-form video on SLS theology).

What Is Satan's Little Season Theology?

The phrase comes from Revelation 20:3, 7, which describes a short period after Christ's thousand-year reign when Satan will be "loosed for a little season" before the final judgment. Most Christians understand this as something still in the future. But a growing online movement believes we're living in that little season right now.

Here's their timeline: Jesus died and rose again around 33 AD. But instead of waiting for a future return, they believe Jesus physically came back in 70 AD when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem. At that point, he established a thousand-year golden age of Christianity where he literally ruled the earth. This reign lasted until sometime between 1070 and 1776 AD (there's disagreement on the exact date, and speculation around phantom time). Then Satan was released to deceive the nations, which is why we don't remember this golden age. Our history books have been altered. We're living in the deception.

It's important to note this isn't full preterism, which says all prophecy was fulfilled by 70 AD. Little season believers still await Christ's final return, the great white throne judgment, and the new heavens and new earth. They see themselves as occupying a unique middle position.

The Conspiracy Web

What makes this theology particularly concerning is how it interweaves with numerous conspiracy theories. These conspiracies actually existed before this eschatology and aren't inherently Christian. But Little Season theology claims to explain how they all fit together. Little Season eschatology seems to provide a type of meta-narrative that is attractive to many, especially if you are drawn to conspiracy thinking.

The list is extensive. There's Tartaria, an alleged advanced civilization erased from history. Mud floods that supposedly destroyed evidence. Phantom time theory, which claims 700 years were added to our calendar. Flat earth cosmology and geocentrism (the belief that the earth is stationary and the sun moves around it). Beautiful old cathedrals are considered proof of a more advanced, angelic civilization during Christ's millennial reign.

There are also troubling elite conspiracies. The Vatican is hiding true history. Freemasons and Illuminati control world events. And unfortunately, some versions include antisemitic theories about Jewish deception. While not everyone who holds this view embraces all these conspiracies, the theology creates a framework where almost any evidence against it can be dismissed as part of Satan's deception.

Why People Find It Appealing

Before addressing concerns, I want to acknowledge what draws people to this view. Many come from dispensationalism and are asking honest questions about passages like Matthew 24:34, where Jesus says "this generation will not pass away" before certain events occur. They're taking Jesus seriously when he speaks about timing. That's commendable.

Others are troubled by American Christianity's uncritical support of modern Israel. When Christians seem to give a blank check to a nation-state regardless of its actions, people rightly feel unsettled and search for a theology that allows space for critique.

There's also the appeal of special knowledge. This feels like putting together a grand puzzle with your online friends, connecting dots that mainstream Christianity has missed. It provides a community feel and a sense of being part of something hidden and mysterious.

I appreciate the earnest desire to understand Scripture. The problem isn't the questions being asked. It's where the answers are being found.

Where This Goes Wrong

Let me share several serious concerns with this theology.

The Unfalsifiable Problem

Any piece of evidence you can imagine bringing against these claims can be dismissed as part of the deception. Archaeological findings? Manipulated. Historical documents? Fraudulent. Expert testimony? Part of the elite conspiracy. It’s unclear what evidence, if any, could change their mind or call into question the validity of Little Season eschatology.

The Same Framework They Rejected

Many Little Season believers claim to have left dispensationalism behind. But, to us, it appears they're using a very similar interpretive framework. Both views believe in a literal 1,000-year

earthly kingdom. Both expect a literal Gog and Magog battle. Both apply a highly literal reading to prophetic texts (though inconsistently). Both seem pessimistic about the present age.

The only difference? Dispensationalists put these events in the future. Little season believers put them in the past. It's the same hermeneutic with a different timeline.

Drawing from Non-Christian Sources

These conspiracy theories (Tartaria, mud floods, phantom time, flat earth) come from outside Christianity. Non-believers hold these views. So why should Christians trust these secular conspiracy theories over historical evidence and scientific inquiry that thousands of believers have contributed to over centuries? It seems backwards to accept fringe theories from unbelievers while rejecting mainstream scholarship from believers.

The Anti-Semitism Problem

Not everyone holding this view is antisemitic, but the theology creates space for antisemitic conspiracy thinking. Skepticism about the Talmud, the Masoretic text, and modern Judaism can easily slide into "Jewish people are deceiving the nations" narratives. This is dangerous and contrary to Christianity.

The Deception Dilemma

If we're in Satan's little season and he's deceiving the nations, how do they know they’re not deceived? How do they know the YouTube videos and podcasts promoting this aren't themselves deceptive? The algorithm feeding them these videos could just as easily be Satanic deception as any other source of information.

A Better Way: Already But Not Yet

There's a beautiful alternative that doesn't require conspiracy thinking or rejecting centuries of church history. It's called amillennialism, and it's been the majority view of the church throughout history.

The key is understanding that Jesus' crucifixion was his coronation. The gospels show this clearly. He receives a crown of thorns. A sign proclaims him "King of the Jews." He enters Jerusalem on a donkey in a royal procession. He wears a purple robe. Jesus is declared king through his death and resurrection.

When Jesus ascends into heaven, he ascends to his throne (Ephesians 1:20-23; Philippians 2:5-11; Hebrews 1:3). He's ruling and reigning right now over the entire cosmos from heaven. The millennium isn't a literal thousand years but represents the complete era from Christ's first coming to his second coming. A thousand in Scripture often means a large, complete number (Psalm 90:4; 2 Peter 3:8).

This means we are in Christ's kingdom right now. But it's a spiritual kingdom that has physical implications. Jesus himself said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36). The kingdom grows through the gospel, through changed hearts, through communities of believers loving their neighbors and caring for the least of these.

Yes, there may be a little season when Satan is released. But we don't need elaborate conspiracies to make sense of it. We simply need to recognize that Satan deceives people about who Christ is, keeping them from true faith. Could we be in that season now? Maybe. Maybe not. The framework doesn't require us to know, and it certainly doesn't require rewriting history or believing in conspiracies.

And here's the hope: Jesus is still on the throne. One day, Jesus will return bodily, visibly, and unmistakably. There will be a final judgment. He will make all things new. Our task isn't to figure out the exact timeline but to faithfully proclaim the gospel and live as citizens of his kingdom today, loving God and loving others.

Moving Forward

If you're exploring Little Season theology, I want to ask you some honest questions. Why does this view require believing that millions of historical documents are fraudulent? Why does it align so closely with non-Christian conspiracy theories? If Satan is deceiving the nations now, what makes you confident you're not among the deceived?

More importantly, have you explored amillennialism? Have you read how the majority of Christians throughout history have understood these passages? First, I'd recommend starting with a book that explains how to study scripture, like How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth by Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, or How to Read the Bible Book by Book by the same authors (affiliate links). If you want to dive into Revelation more specifically, you could try The Power of His Reign by Jonathan Ammon or Richard Bauckham's The Theology of the Book of Revelation (affiliate links).

The book of Revelation wasn't meant to be a puzzle to decode or a timeline to plot out. It was meant to give Christians hope and confidence during persecution and suffering. It shows us that Jesus is on the throne, that Jesus wins in the end, and that our faithful witness matters. Whether we're in tribulation or in triumph, whether we're in a little season or a long reign, Jesus is King.

That's not deception. That's the good news.

Rev. Dr. Jonathan Romig used AI to adapt the closed captions from Theology Together's Satan's Little Season video to draft this blog post. He carefully reviewed, edited, and posted it. Please feel free to share this with your small group, Sunday school, students, or church.

Downloadable Presentation

If you would like a copy of our slide deck, you can download a copy for free.

Discussion Questions

1. Had you heard of Satan's little season theology before reading this? What was your initial reaction?
2. Why do you think conspiracy theories are particularly appealing in our current cultural moment?
3. How can we take people's questions about difficult Bible passages seriously while guiding them toward sound theology?
4. How does Jesus' ministry, suffering, crucifixion, and ascension reveal his kingdom? What Bible passages come to mind?
5. How does understanding Jesus as currently reigning change how you view current events and your daily life?